



View from the Blackdown Hills

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Issue No 110 February 2014

AONB DEALT A BLOW BY PROPOSED COUNCIL CUTS

THE Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership was shocked to learn that Somerset County Council has proposed to cut funding to the county's AONB's by 90 per cent in a bid to make £18million in savings.

Somerset Council Council are proposing to remove AONB "management costs", slashing the current grant pot of £45,000 to just £5,000, leaving only £1,000 each for the Blackdown Hills, Mendip Hills, Quantock Hills and Cranborne Chase AONBs.

Local conservationists warn that this serious reduction to core funding could affect the work the small staff team does to look after the unspoilt countryside of the Blackdowns Hills, and social and economic support it provides to its local communities.

Manager of the Blackdown Hills AONB,

by News Reporter

Linda Bennett, said: "We recognised that all local authorities are facing serious financial challenges as a result of reduction in central government funding and knew we would be facing further funding reductions. However, a cut of nearly 90 per cent has totally astounded us."

"The Blackdown Hills AONB forms an impressive backdrop to Taunton and Wellington and is much enjoyed by the county's residents. We can only continue our work with communities if all of our local authorities are prepared to share the very reasonable costs. Somerset County Council sadly is proposing to renege on its commitment."

The Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership

has written to the leader of Somerset County Council John Osman asking why these cuts are necessary.

In a statement on the county council's website, leader John Osman said: "We have to make tough choices, but we are the same as any careful household. We have a reduced income, increased bills, something has to give."

His comments were backed up by Cabinet member David Huxtable who added: "It is not something we want to do, but it is something we have to do - just as every council in the country is now doing."

"We are taking people's views into account where we can - that's why our council tax is frozen, but these are tough financial times."

Somerset County Council's budget will be decided on February 19th.

Complete support for community projects



■ COMPLETE Meats in Chard presented three local community groups with a £50 donation from their twice-yearly community draw.

Chard Town Football Club had just bought a defibrillator and treasurer Adrian Clifford said the money would help create a proper housing for it. Buckland St Mary Pre-School needed equipment replaced and Tatworth Pre-School wanted a new play mat.

All were very grateful to Complete Meats for the donation which was presented to them by Mark Urquhart.

Pictured are Maya Forster and Kerry Stevens (Buckland St Mary Pre-School) Mark Urquhart (Complete Meats), Andrea Bolton (Tatworth Pre-School) and Adrian Clifford (Chard Town FC).

Project comes to an end

A PROJECT which aimed to protect and promote the Blackdown Hills landscape has come to an end after eight years.

The Neroche Scheme, which was led by the Forestry Commission, has now come to an end and the Hemyock office will close.

A statement from the Neroche Project said:

"This is not the end of our work: the energy and goodwill we have built up over the years are now being channelled into locally-owned, community based groups, which are all driven by a commitment to people and nature in our landscape."

The Neroche Scheme was created as a partnership be-

tween the community of the Blackdown Hills and 17 agencies, authorities and local organisations, led by Forestry Commission, and including the Blackdown Hills AONB, Somerset and Devon County Councils, Natural England and three district councils.

The scheme addressed all aspects of

landscape heritage, investing in the fabric of the heritage, making it accessible to all, and improving people's ability to manage it into the future.

During the past eight

years the project has supported a number of schemes including the Harepath Trail and Valleyhead Way footpaths and the Neroche forest cattle grazing scheme.



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■ RED Bull staff who took part in a mass jump with Skydive UK in 2013

Skydivers needed for world record breaking challenge

THE hunt has started to find 260 outgoing fundraisers to help break a Guinness World Record in Dunkeswell.

Skydive UK based at Dunkeswell Airfield near Honiton will attempt to take 260 people for a 15,000ft tandem skydive in just one day. The record, which is currently held in Germany, stands at 251 skydives to take place over a 24 hour period and was set in 2013.

The event is being organised to raise money for the 50 participating charities and to celebrate 50 years of skydiving at Dunkeswell Airfield.

Event co-ordinator, Louise Banks from Skydive UK said: "Although this record is very ambitious, we have the two fastest jump-planes in the UK, making it achievable but only if enough people sign up!

"If each charity can find just six people willing to take on the challenge for them, we'll have enough people to smash the current record and earn a place in the iconic book for 2015."

One of the charities taking part is Hospiscare in Exeter, who like the other charities, will pay for support-

ers' skydives if they raise a minimum amount in sponsorship (£395).

Tandem skydives can only take place during daylight hours so Skydive UK have opted for the longest day of the year to attempt the record; summer solstice which falls on 21st June. The event will start at dawn and end when everyone has jumped or when the sun goes down – whichever happens first.

Louise said: "This is an amazing opportunity for anyone wanting to do something a bit different in 2014. There are loads of reasons for wanting to skydive for charity; some people jump to celebrate a birthday, conquer a fear or jump in memory of a loved one. Whatever the reason, our official Guinness World Record Attempt is a rare opportunity you won't come across again in a hurry. It makes a very exciting and amazing experience that much more unique and notable."

For more information visit www.skydiveukltd.com/Guinness-world-record-skydive or by calling 01404 890222.

Trustees needed to help shape future of Somerset's heritage

SOMERSET and Devon County Councils are seeking a chair person and up to seven trustees to lead an important new charity called the South West Heritage Trust.

The two councils believe that creating an independent charitable trust is the best way to ensure a strong future for the heritage services they now provide.

Being a trustee will offer a rewarding and challenging opportunity. Successful applicants will use their experience and passion for the heritage of Somerset and Devon to lead and shape the trust, securing the future of some extremely important heritage collections and cultural attractions.

The South West Heritage Trust will have responsibility for:

- Managing the Museum of Somerset in Taunton and the Somerset Rural Life Museum in Glas-

tonbury (which has recently secured funding of £1.6million for major refurbishment);

- Curatorial care of more than three million museum objects ranging from Bronze Age gold to modern art.

- Caring for the archives of Somerset and Devon from the eighth century to the present day, and making them available through purpose-built facilities as well as on-line.

- Protecting Somerset's historic environment.

The trust will have guaranteed funding of £10million over five years.

Deputy leader of Somerset County Council, David Hall, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for people with skills and passion to have a key role in ensuring the fu-

ture of our heritage. The creation of South West Heritage Trust is a significant development for our heritage services and trust status could mean that a number of commercial and funding opportunities are opened up."

Trustees will not be paid but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed. Trustees will initially be appointed for a three-year term. The time commitment is initially expected to be up to one day a week (some of which may be during normal working hours).

A trustee recruitment pack, which contains details about the roles and how to apply, can be downloaded from www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage.

For an informal discussion and to register your interest, please telephone 01823 356897 or e-mail mcgreen@somerset.gov.uk.

NEWS briefs

Charity big breakfast

A "BIG Breakfast" will be held at Clayhidon Village Hall to raise funds for Cancer Research UK.

The Big Breakfast event will take place on Saturday, March 1st from 9am until 1pm at the village hall.

For more information phone 01823- 680481

Business networking

THE Blackdown Hills Business Association hosts a number of social and networking events allowing business owners to get together and share tips.

Non members are welcome to attend the events, the next one being a workshop in how to gain publicity on February 11th.

The workshop will be led by Nell Barrington of Barrington Associates.

For more information visit the BHBA website www.bhba.org.uk.

'Souper' quiz night

THE Tuckers Arms Raft Club in Dalwood near Axminster will be hosting a "Souper" quiz night.

Teams of four are invited to take part in the quiz evening which will include a soup supper with crusty rolls.

The soup and quiz night will take place on Saturday, February 15th at the Tuckers Arms from 7.15pm.

Entry fee is £5 per person to include supper. For more information phone 01404 831481.



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Village B&B makes shortlist for 'Britain's Friendliest Business'

THE Belfry Restaurant and Hotel in Yacombe has made the finals of a national competition to find Britain's friendliest business.

Run by husband and wife team Neil and Sarah Jane Martin, the business beat off some stiff competition to become one of 20 finalists in the award sponsored by Liberis, one of the UK's largest providers of small business funding.

If it wins, The Belfry will be crowned "Britain's Friendliest Business" and its owners will receive a cash award of £10,000.

The company impressed judges with its strong entry making the case as to why it should win the award.

The Belfry source as much food as possible from local suppliers in the South West, supporting local businesses and host regular events for locals as well as guests including weekly coffee mornings and a monthly Knit and Natter group.

The judges particularly liked the company's customer ethos - "We provide a friendly welcome whether it is local guests here for dinner or those here

for several nights - every single one is important to us. It is wonderful to provide a place for our locals to visit and catch up with each other over coffee or a meal."

Said Paul Mildenstein, CEO of Liberis: "We've been bowled over by the quality of entries and the obvious passion and devotion that Britain's small businesses give to make sure their customers get the very best service. They should all be celebrated, but The Belfry really stood out."

Each finalist now has to get as many Facebook "Likes" as possible as part of the final stage of the competition.

The number of "Likes" received will be considered by the judges when they make their final decision on the winner. Support the businesses on Twitter @LiberisUK using the hashtag #BFBiz and on Facebook at facebook.com/Bri-tainsFriendliestBiz.

Owner Sarah Jane Martin said: "We are highly delighted on being nominated into the shortlist and it is wonderful to receive such fabulous feedback.

"It is the first time we have entered a competition such as this since we purchased The Belfry in August 2007.

"We try really hard to make all our guests feel welcome and enjoy their stay with us so it is lovely to hear the feedback that they really do.

"We have completed various restoration projects internally and externally and it has been lovely to welcome guests back to see the changes."

Liberis launched the competition to reward hard working small businesses who think of their customers first based on their own mission to provide business-friendly finance to small businesses - many of whom are struggling in the current tight credit environment.

The company has provided over £60 million of funding to help small and medium sized businesses grow.

The winner and two runners up of Britain's Friendliest Business competition will be announced at the end of February.

Lighting up Hemyock

PRIZES have been awarded to the winners of a Christmas competition organised by Hemyock Parish Council.

The council asked villagers and businesses to decorate their properties during the festive period and invited Chief Executive of Devon County Council, Phil Norrey, to judge the competition.

The winners were: First place, winning a prize of £25, Mrs and Mrs Lane at 24 Eastlands; Second prize of £15 went to Mr and Mrs Gubb at Endeavour, Culmbridge Road; and first in the business category, winning £20, was SPS Hair Design, Station Road.

Mr Norrey said: "Overall I was very impressed by how well Hemyock was 'trimmed up' for Christmas. It was very difficult to pick winners, but for sheer exuberance, it was impossible to ignore 24 Eastlands.

"For second place in the 'domestic' category there were a lot of worthy contenders, but, for managing to combine a number of elements in a colourful and elegant display, 'Endeavour' just pipped it.

"The attention to detail in the window display of SPS Hairdressing earned the award in the 'business' category."

Hemyock Parish Council would like to thank everyone who entered the competition and for making the village look cheerful and festive.

Do you suffer with slow broadband?

A CHANNEL Four documentary film crew are looking for people who are affected by a slow, rural broadband connection in the Blackdown Hills.

Dragonfly Film and Television are making a documentary about poor rural broadband and have heard about the campaign for fast broadband in Upton parish and

the Blackdown Hills AONB.

Producer, Ellie Gibbs would like to talk anyone in the area who is adversely affected by the lack of high speed internet.

She can be contacted on 0207 033 2256 or email ellie.gibbs@dragonfly.tv.

A public meeting on broadband will be held on Friday, February

7th in Upton Manor Rooms at 6pm.

The meeting has been organised by Upton Parish Council and will be chaired by Neil Parish MP.

Representatives from Connecting Devon & Somerset, Devon County Council and BT will also be at the meeting.

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Richard Read, BSc. (Hons), MA., Dip.SW

Joanna Read, MA (Hons), MA., Dip.SW, Ad.Dip.ASW

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Working our Woodlands

THE woodland Association are hosting a Woodland Management Course on our farm on February 19th. These one day courses are very popular and covering a wide range of management issues such as how much should you thin, what species to remove and what species should you plant. The day also covers the way we on the farm harvest wood fuel for our own wood fired central heating units.

With an increasing interest in wood fuel we may be in danger of over harvesting with a long lasting impact on woodlands and wild life, the recovery from over thinning is a long time, sometimes over 30 years, it goes without saying we should be planting more trees than we cut down.

Dead wood/trees causes some people to worry. Standing dead trees are a tremendous source of good habitat with well over 80 different species of invertebrates in a single tree, that's besides bats, dormice, birds etc.

A general rule is if a dead tree is standing and is no danger to building, property or other trees and is not a hazard to humans or farm stock, like on a public path then it should be left, especially if it has started to rot as it will be no good for fuel.

Fallen limbs and other wood that is on

with John Greenshields

the ground, if too rotted for fuel, should not be tidied up or burnt, but should be stacked in heaps out of the way of future forestry operations. This will make suitable living accommodation for literally hundreds of animals and bugs of all sizes.

Pre-historic and historic clearance of our woodland led us to a low point at the beginning of the twentieth century when woodland was only five per cent of Britain - and falling. It is now nearly 12 per cent - and rising. Through creating this major new asset, we can be sure of handing on to future generations something better than we inherited. We should put sustainability at the heart of our forestry policies and practices so that we can realise the full potential of our woodlands as economic, environmental and social resources.

The forestry Commissions Woodland Carbon Code is a voluntary standard for woodland creation projects in the UK which will make claims about the carbon dioxide they sequester. Independent certification to this standard provides assurance and clarity about the carbon savings of these sustainably managed woodlands, see their web site for further details.



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Blackdowns clubs and societies



coffee morning at Ann Slater's lovely home. The competition winner was Sue Little.

Hemyock WI

HEMYOCK WI held their ninth Birthday at the Catherine Wheel.

It was the night of the January meeting so the President, Lyn Taylor, conducted a few business items.

She reminded members that in February there would be a draw for the two bursaries to help with the cost of attending the WI's own Denman College near Oxford.

The competition that night will be for an animal, made by the member, in any medium.

The winner will represent Hemyock at the spring Group Meeting.

Lyn also took names for a skittles match and reminded members that the Book Group will meet at Cindy's on January 28th.

Lyn also announced that Sandra had obtained 22 tickets for War Horse which is being shown at Wellington on February 27th.

Hemyock WI meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in Forbes Lounge.

Visitors will be made very welcome.

Blackdown Hills Gardening Club

THE first meeting of the year was led by Secretary Jane Hunt in the absence of Chairman Graham Salmon.

Blackdown Hills Transition Group

Shedding the light on lightbulbs

WE all know the joke about how many people it takes to change a light bulb but how much does it cost to keep it lit?

The answer may surprise you and change the way you illuminate your house and manage your energy costs.

There are three main types of light bulb that I am going to review. I have taken the purchase costs and projected operating hours from one website (www.lightbulbs-direct.com). Prices for these items may vary at different shops and suppliers.

1) Incandescent bulbs or "Edison bulbs". These are filaments that glow in an inert atmosphere held in a glass envelope (or bulb - hence the term). They are only about 5% efficient and dissipate most of their energy as heat. This is not generally a good idea in a fitting that is meant to provide a maximum amount of light. Bulb life is approximately 1000 operating

hours.

(Cost = £1.38 each, 60 watts power consumption).

2) Fluorescent compact fittings (More commonly known as "Energy Saving Bulbs"). These are a miniature version of a fitting that we generally associate with a strip light. They are much more efficient than an incandescent bulb and have a projected operation life of 10000 hours.

(Cost = £ 7-98 each, 12 watts power consumption)

3) LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs - newest type on the market. These are fittings that incorporate many LED's into an array that is similar in shape and size to a conventional incandescent fitting. These too are very energy efficient and have a projected lifespan of 100000 operating hours before failure.

(Cost = £22.79 each, 7 watts power consumption)

For comparison purposes, cal-

culations will be based upon a projected operating time of five hours a day using a flat kWh cost of £0.14. All bulbs are rated at approximately the equivalent of 60 watts illumination.

Incandescent bulbs would have to be changed 9 times over 5 years or 18 times over ten years, the fluorescent bulb once in 5 years and twice over a 10 year period and the LED unit would not require replacement. The justification for an LED bulb will have to be a long term investment. These do however have a projected life of some 11 years.

Next meeting of the Blackdown Hills Transition Group will be at the Merry Harriers at Clayhidon (Postcode EX15 3TR) on Wednesday, February 5th at 7.30pm.

*Neil Arnold
Vice Chair - Blackdown Hills
Transition Group*

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

The AGM is postponed until February 19th preceded by a talk on Camellias.

Treasurer Colvin Parry was unwell so 2014 membership subscriptions were taken in by Vera Manning.

The speaker was Neil Lovesey from Picket Lane Nursery, South Perrott, his subject being the bee friendly garden.

Neil has a dozen bee hives on 10 acres growing many plants. He amazed members with the fact that there are 260 different types of bee, 26 assorted bumble bees alone.

His slides illustrated the slight variations in their appearance and size.

Seventy to 80 per cent of all the food we eat depends on bees, such tiny creatures ensuring we all live.

Pat and Robina organised the raffle before refreshments were served by Teresa and Rosie.

Neil brought along plants for sale the flowers of which are highly attractive to bees.

The March meeting will be on the 19th when John

Sanders will demonstrate planting up sinks and troughs at 7.30pm in Churchinford Hall. Visitors welcome for £3.

Clayhidon Friends

The December meeting was a Christmas supper party.

A delicious ham salad was prepared by Heather Procter, with soup and puds made by Helen Lancaster and Freda Dewar.

Members sat round a large decorated table, and after the meal, Brenda Persey provided a very entertaining half hour of music, song (with members and guests joining in) - and amusing anecdotes which gave them much pleasure.

Thanks went to the cooks and entertainers who ensured it was a wonderful evening.

The New Year meeting on January 9th was a lunch at the Blackdown Garden Centre with guests.

New members are welcome to join, and the present members have agreed a rise in subscriptions to £14.

Landowners reap the rewards of working together

CONSERVATION groups and landowners are celebrating a high point in local support and collaboration for those who look after our most important landscape features.

Over the past two years, two locally-run projects, Beef and Butterflies and Woodbiz Woodlands have helped and advised nearly 150 farm businesses, small woodland owners and wood-based firms in the Blackdown Hills and East Devon area.

The Beef and Butterflies project visited landowners whose holdings include areas of rough, marshy or heathy pasture, to advise them on the wildlife value of their land and the options for its management. This type of land, though difficult to farm, supports hundreds of species of wildflower, butterflies, other insects and birds. Particularly associated with the 'spring line' where springs emerge along the sides of the Blackdown valleysides, old wet pastures are a visual delight in the summer months.

The project has also helped initiate a new locally-owned group to represent the interests of the owners of these wet pastures.

The Blackdown Hills Rough Grazing Association is run by and for land owners and managers, independent of outside agencies, and will launch a new website early in 2014.

The new association will help put owners and contractors in touch

with one another, and will provide important advice on veterinary and other issues.

The Woodbiz Woodlands project has helped woodland owners view their woodland assets afresh, and among many initiatives, has run training days to teach woodland owners how to grade and value their trees, while they are standing. That way, they can make better decisions about woodland management, retaining good timber trees as growing future assets.

Woodbiz has also helped launch Culmwoods, a local "Wood for Work" group, whose members undertake woodland management as volunteers, taking the wood they harvest in lieu of payment.

The legacy of the Woodbiz project will be taken forward by the Blackdowns and East Devon Woodland Association, which runs the annual Blackdowns Woodland Fair.

Gavin Saunders, who oversaw the two projects as part of the Neroche Scheme, said: "Our work over the last two years has provided a foundation for local people to work together in looking after their own landscape. There is a huge amount of expertise across the hills, but people need to be able to share experiences and turn to the right people for help. Both the Woodland Association and the new Rough Grazing Association offer people the means to do that."

Beef and Butterflies was delivered by local experts George Greenshields and Len North, with input from Roland Stonex and colleagues at FWAG South West. Woodbiz Woodlands was delivered by John Greenshields.

John Greenshields, who also chairs the Woodland Association, said: "Our woodlands and rough pastures rely on active management to keep them valuable for wildlife, and productive for their owners. Local people in this area now have the support networks to help them achieve both."

Linda Bennett, Manager of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership, said: "These projects have drawn attention to the unique qualities of our protected landscapes, and underlined the need for all of us to work together to support landowners in the tough but valuable work they do."

"We look forward to supporting the Woodland Association and the Rough Grazing Association in the future."

Both projects received financial support from Making It Local, the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Blackdown Hills AONB.

Making it Local is a locally managed grants scheme in the Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONB areas incorporating funding from the EU, Defra, and Leader.



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QUEEN'S COLLEGE

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Lovely lunch

THE Hemyock Acorns enjoyed a lunch cooked for them at the Forbes Lounge.

The lunch was cooked for them by the ladies who cook the Blackdown Lunch there each month. Thanks were given to Acorns Treasurer, Joan Fewtrell who is one of the regular team of volunteers and Chairman Alan Craig thanked all concerned for such a successful day.

The Hemyock Acorns is a social group that offers friendship and social activities to elderly residents in the village.

To find out more - Telephone: 01823 340830

Email: admissions@queenscollege.org.uk • www.queenscollege.org.uk

NEWS *briefs*

Managing woodland

A DAY'S seminar in how to manage woodlands for wildlife and woodfuel is being held later this month.

The day is designed to help the small woodland owners manage their woodland for woodfuel and wildlife.

The day will include a tour of woodland at Park Farm near Wellington, looking at how it is managed.

The event will take place on February 19th.

Numbers are limited so booking is essential. Contact John Greenshields on 01823 660764 or email parkfarm@tinyonline.co.uk to book a place.

Rain doesn't stop Clayhidon bell ringers

CLAYHIDON'S bellringers braved a wild night on New Year's Eve to ring out the old year and sound a welcome to 2014.

High winds and rain couldn't keep them out of the St Andrew's tower to honour a centuries-old tradition.

Grant for pub campaign

STOCKLAND Community Pub Ltd (SCPL) has been awarded a £2,000 grant towards their campaign to buy the village inn.

They have been granted a £2,000 bursary award from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, which is being administered by SCPL sponsors The Plunkett Foundation.

The money will be used to fund the campaign to retain the village pub for the community.

Laura returns to Wellington roots

A LOCAL holistic therapist has returned to her Wellington roots.

Laura Cooper is bringing all her skills in art and holistic therapy back to the Blackdown Hills following a six year absence from the town.

A former cafe owner, Laura is sharing her skills and expertise from her baking days by working alongside Jane Osborne in The Old Sale Rooms Antique shop and tea rooms.

Laura said: "I am really looking forward to using all my old cook books and baking cakes and making soups and flans

for everyone again. The atmosphere in The Old Sale Rooms is a peaceful, elegant one and a joy to be part of.

"We have many ideas for 2014, including craft groups and vintage inspired events. It really is an exciting time of both of us."

Laura's parents own the building and used to run Wellington Salerooms there for more than 30 years and when Laura was young she helped them out.

She will also be displaying her colourful artwork in the shop as well as continuing her passion as a holistic therapist.



■ LAURA Cooper with some of her artwork

The work is over – let playtime begin!

MUCH anticipated improvements to Payhembury's play area are now complete, after improvements chosen by local children were put in place.

Payhembury Playing Field Committee and East Devon District Council have been working closely together with Payhembury Primary School to make £6,700 worth of improvements. This money has been contributed by developers through Section 106 funding for play. This type of contribution was a condition of planning approval for a number of housing developments in the area.

Children had a choice of four designs and voted for their favourite in a special assembly at Payhembury Primary School. Of the 66 children who voted, 38 per cent chose the winning design by HACS SMP, which includes a climbing wall, climbing net and a spinning item.

Peter Bentley from Payhembury Playing Field Committee, who has led on the project, said: "I'm delighted for the children that we now have a more exciting play area. We have achieved this with the excellent co-operation of Mrs Hammett and the school, with the pupils

being really keen to get involved and help with the project. They have been a real credit to the village".

Penny Hammett, Headteacher at Payhembury Primary School, said: "I am so delighted to see the new equipment in place. The whole village has contributed to improving the facilities for the children and they are very excited about spending time on it."

"The children thoroughly enjoyed being involved in the process and I know it has given them a sense of responsibility knowing that they have chosen it and now want to look after it."

Councillor Iain Chubb, EDDC Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: "I'm keen to help promote a healthy lifestyle through outdoor activities. The new equipment has brightened up the play area and given the children a greater choice of exciting activities. Especially gratifying is the way EDDC and the people in the parish went about selecting the equipment with a truly participatory approach enabling local children to make the decision".

The four designs that the youngsters chose from were

provided by companies who followed the children's design brief for the area. They came up with this early last year, when EDDC visited Payhembury Primary School and Payhembury Playing Field Committee visited the Youth Club to find out what type of activities children wanted in the play area.



■ HOW the play area will look

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MEMBERS of the Magic Carpet group who contributed to the exhibition

Magic Carpet art on show at gallery

AN exhibition called Magic Carpet at Thelma Hulbert Gallery in Honiton features work produced by a local group of adults with learning disabilities.

They have participated in art workshops run by local arts-for-health charity Magic Carpet.

The group worked with Honiton-born author Clive Essame and sculptor James Lake to create an exhibition of collage and sculpture that illustrates the

story of Impisi, a book written by Clive.

The artwork is accompanied by a series of five extracts from the book.

Impisi is the story of a young male lion, Nkosi, who is about to take over the pride when he is caught in a wire snare. He escapes but has a badly damaged leg.

The lion regains control over his life, lifting himself from the depths of despair to fulfil his true potential.

Clive commented: "Impisi teaches us about prejudice and disability awareness, looking at how people with disabilities might see themselves and how others see them."

"Working on this exhibition with the Magic Carpet participants, who all have learning disabilities, has been great; they have really enjoyed the creative experience."

The exhibition runs till February 15th

Theatre tour comes to Clayhidon

THE Northcott Theatre will be returning to Clayhidon Village Hall with talented performers from the The Uncommon Players, and a new production.

Everyone who attended the production of Talking Heads last year will be delighted to see the talented company is back with a bittersweet comedy, Education Rita, made famous by the film starring Julie Walters and Michael Caine.

Opening at the Northcott Theatre last September to excellent reviews, it hilariously explores the prejudices of a strong-minded pair in their story of increasing mutual respect.

It makes for an evening of classic comedy, and with University Degrees becoming expensive commodities it also asks penetrating questions about the purpose and value of investments in education, for students and teachers alike.

Education Rita will be performed at

Clayhidon Village Hall on Saturday, March 8th at 7.30pm.

Tickets are available from beehill@hotmail.co.uk or telephone: 01823 680 347.

Later this month acoustic duo Ben and Alfie will take to the stage.

Over the last few years, this young talented duo have been engaged for private events, festivals and concerts and commissioned music for film, theatre and dance.

Ben and Alfie are classically trained but then began playing/arranging old folk tunes.

Throughout their lives, they have picked up many different musical influences which shape the music.

Now with two albums under their belts, the duo is quickly establishing itself as one of the hottest new talents around.

Ben and Alfie will be performing in Clayhidon on February 12th at 7.30pm. Tickets available from Bee Hill.



BEN and Alfie

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Choir raises cash for water charity

MEETING Voices Community Choir of Chard, performed at several local events over the festive season, to raise funds for WaterAid, a charity that provides clean water and sanitation to places such as Malawi and Ghana.

The choir also featured at the Combe St Nicholas Carols by Candlelight evening held in the Church raising funds for local charities and joined other local choirs at Wellington Monument to sing Christmas Carols under the stars on a very cold early December evening.

In July the Meeting Voices joined many other choirs from on Bristol harbour side, where 1,000 people sang a varied selection of songs.

The Choir has raised

£1,520 for Water Aid over the last six months.

Meeting Voices Community Choir has been singing together since 2000, meeting in the Chard Town Hall on Wednesday evenings, singing and enjoying songs from around the world under the leadership of their musical director, Caroline Rigby, the choir is enjoying a full house at most sessions and is thriving, with approximately 50 members who share a common joy of joining together in song in an informal atmosphere.

All songs are chosen from a variety of cultures (e.g. Africa, Eastern Europe, Georgia, America as well as folk songs collected locally from South West England) and in different languages.

Students artwork on display

ARTWORK by students from across the South West is currently on display at the Thelma Hulbert Gallery in Honiton.

The gallery launched its latest exhibition, Degrees of Animation, on Saturday, January 18th, part of the internationally renowned Animated Exeter Festival.

The work of 21 artists is on display, including animations by recent graduates Mara Fradella (pictured left) and Anna Louise Day.

Susannah Shaw, Director of Animated Exeter, who opened the exhibition, said it highlighted how many talented animators there are across the region.

Boston Tea Party were also on hand with a pop-up café for the opening, providing refreshments for visitors.

The exhibition is open until March 1st, with a family drop-in animation workshop during the February half term.

Panto anniversary

TATWORTH Pantomime Society will be presenting its 30th pantomime this month.

This year's pantomime will be Alice in Wonderland, at Tatworth Memorial Hall, near Chard on Thursday, February 27th through to Saturday, March 1st at 7.30pm plus matinee 2.30pm Saturday.

Tickets will be on sale in February from South Chard PO and Stores, Herbert's Stores, Tatworth and Kenny's Hairdressers Chard.



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New Digs for Dogs Rehoming Centre Appeal



Ferne Animal Sanctuary are appealing for help to build a new kennel block and rehoming centre on the site of the existing kennels at the Sanctuary.

The build will commence in March 2014, and will enable the Sanctuary to house twice the number of dogs at any one time, greatly increasing the impact that we have on rehoming in the area.

Please help us raise the £1 million it will cost to build the Rehoming Centre



£5.00

Helps to pay for a brick for the Rehoming Centre. You will receive a certificate acknowledging your kind donation, which can be sent as a Christmas gift.



£50-£250

Helps towards the build, which is due to start in March 2014. Donations of this amount will be displayed on a green donation board in the rehoming centre.



£250-£500

Will help towards laying the foundations of a new life for the hundreds of dogs that Ferne rehomes every year. Your name will be displayed on the silver donation board.



£500-£1,000

Will help us to reduce our energy costs as the new Rehoming Centre will be a great deal more energy efficient. Donations of this amount will be displayed on our gold donation board and you will receive an invitation to the grand opening ceremony.



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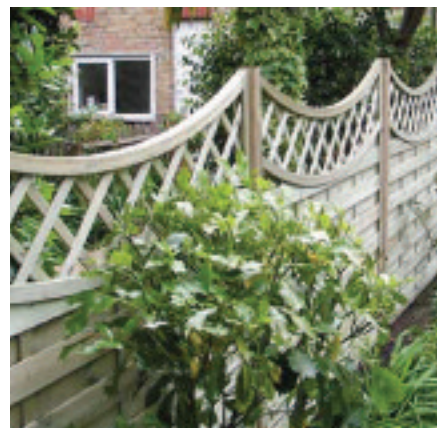


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Kerswell

0.7 Acres

Well presented character home with annexe and countryside views. 3 Bedrooms plus 1 bedroom annexe. Separate office. Parking, large gardens and orchard. EPC Band E. Web Find: 51370
Guide £485,000 Horiton 01404 45885



Chardstock

0.4 Acres

Refurbished and enhanced rural cottage in large gardens and grounds. 3 Double bedrooms, 2 en suites, 2 reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room and utility room. EPC Band D. Web Find: 63853
Guide £440,000 Horiton 01404 45885



Sampford Moor

A 3 bedroom detached bungalow enjoying fine country views. Hall, lounge/diner, kitchen, utility/garden room and shower room. Private gardens and large garage/workshop. Web Find: 63048
Guide £249,000 Wellington 01823 662822



Stockland

A charming character cottage near the centre of this popular village. Sold to a buyer from Surrey. Web Find: 50764

Guide £250,000

Horiton 01404 45885



Blackdown Hills

1.9 Acres

A range of traditional red-brick barns with Detailed Planning Consent for holiday cottages. Sold to a buyer from New Zealand. Web Find: 49315

Guide £125,000

Horiton 01404 45885

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

For advice and assistance on a variety of issues including:

- Valuations
- Rural Planning and Diversification
- Renewables
- Compulsory Purchase and Compensations
- Landlord and Tenant Matters
- Estate Management
- Agri-Environment Schemes

Contact Mark Neeson on 01823 662822